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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KINSHASA 001213

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TAGS: PGOV PREL PINR MOPS CG

SUBJECT: DRC NATIONAL SECURITY COUNSELOR ON JOINT PLANNING
CELL, JOINT VERIFICATION COMMISSION, TRIPARTITE FUSION CELL

REF: A. KINSHASA 926
1B. KINSHASA 1175
1C. KINSHASA 1177
1D. E-MAIL FROM COL. RICHARD ORTH
1E. AF/RSA
1F. TO DATTC LTC. SCOTT BRYSON
1G. 9/24/2007

Classified By: CDA S. Brock. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

11. (C) Summary. Cesar Fwani (protect), the DRC's National Security Council (CNS) expert on Tripartite Plus issues, is unimpressed with the concept of grafting a Joint Planning Cell (JPC) onto the existing Tripartite Plus Intelligence Fusion Cell (TFC) but very enthusiastic about the renewal of the DRC-Rwanda Joint Verification Commission (JVC). He has no set position on U.S. participation in the JVC. He expressed exasperation about the relative inertia of the TFC and questioned the value of expanding its mandate. Embassy will analyze the various viewpoints and forward potential strategies for improving the TFC's performance septel. End summary.

12. (C) Cesar Fwani (protect), counselor to the DRC's National Security Council (CNS), reviewed September 20 meetings of the Tripartite Plus Joint Planning Cell (JPC) in Kisangani, and the DRC-Rwanda Joint Verification Commission (JVC) in Goma, with PolOff September 27. Fwani, who oversees the DRC's focal point office for the TFC, has been consistently accommodating and cordial in relations with the Embassy. He served as deputy counselor to Samba Kaputo, the previous National Security Advisor who died unexpectedly in July (ref A).

Joint Planning Cell

13. (C) Fwani was unimpressed with the concept of grafting a JPC onto the existing TFC and seemed content to leave this initiative to die on the vine. He had copies of all of the documents generated at the Kisangani meeting, and was polite but dismissive about the plans for making the TFC subordinate to a yet-undefined multilateral Planning Cell. He expressed frank skepticism about the operational impact of multilateral working groups, claiming that the larger they become, the more unwieldy and the less effective they are. He was fairly negative about multilateral initiatives in general, opining that as the groups got larger, real interaction and collaboration diminished.

Joint Verification Commission

¶4. (C) By contrast, Fwani was very enthusiastic about the Goma meeting and the resultant renewal of the Joint Verification Commission. He stated that bilateral cooperation was almost always preferable to larger groups; he cited the joint verification teams along the Rwanda-DRC border as an example of progress. He stated that he would like to see more efforts to develop this sort of bilateral effort, both with Rwanda and with Uganda. He said that they would be more direct, more targeted, and more immediate than remote-based multilateral efforts, and more likely to result in a reduction of negative forces. He was also aware of -- and appreciative of -- the positive role that MONUC played in these bilateral efforts. Although he knew that the Goma meeting called for U.S. participation in the JVC, he did not know what shape this would take.

Tripartite Fusion Cell (TFC)

¶5. (C) Fwani expressed exasperation about the relative inertia of the TFC. He stated that Samba Kaputo had never seen the value of the project and had politely distanced himself from it. Fwani understood the original concept as a confidence-building measure, but questioned the value of continuing to pour resources into a project which had not progressed beyond its current level of achievement. He noted that the cell had been operational for 20 months, yet "had not made any impact in relation to negative forces." He stated that he had been given responsibility to work with it and would "do his duty," but doubted that anything useful -- i.e., operational intelligence products -- would ever emerge.

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¶6. (C) He divided the TFC initiative into two distinct elements. First, he said if the goal was to have former enemies sit down together and talk, it has already served its purpose. Second, he reiterated that the current configuration would never result in any sort of shared intel. He noted the huge gap between "information" and "intelligence," and stated that without its own agents on the ground, the best the TFC could ever do would be to collect information from others -- and he questioned the value of expending all this effort to collect information that was neither timely nor actionable.

¶7. (C) Fwani was well informed about the TFC's operational challenges, noting various absences of delegates and the presence of junior officers sent by other governments. He was also well-versed about the unwillingness of delegates to put any actual intel on the table. He characterized the TFC as "theater" which would never produce intel -- or even specific information in a timely enough manner to make it useful in an operational sense.

Comment

¶9. (C) Calls at the recent Chiefs of Defense meeting in Lubumbashi to increase the mandate of the TFC (refs B & C) sidestep the issue of whether the cell, as is, is functional. Although it is clear, in ref D's characterization, that "the current configuration doesn't work," Fwani's exasperation with the TFC is more than a bit disingenuous. While, at this moment, the CNS seems mired in inertia in the absence of a new director, and Fwani's access to Kabila and influence is unclear, if it truly wanted to provide intel to the TFC, the CNS clearly has the capacity. This illustrates the fundamental challenge to making the TFC more effective -- the unwillingness of all Tripartite Plus governments to put real intelligence on the table. In light of Fwani's assessment, and because of new information obtained on a recent trip to TFC's Kisangani office by Charge and ORA, post will formulate recommendations on ways to improve TFC via septel. End comment.

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